

Town of Lincoln

Budget Board Meeting

April 6, 2006

Members Present:

**Ken Booth Cheryl Ethier Mary Varr Jack Newman Linda Noble
Bob Ericson Claudette Lussier Carl Brunetti Greg Leonard**

Members Absent:

Joe Dziobek Roberta Gosselin

The meeting began at 7:40 with the Pledge of Allegiance.

There were no minutes available for approval.

The Budget Board decided to analyze the schools' budget first, and Ken Booth turned the meeting over to Cheryl Ethier, the School Subcommittee Chair.

The Subcommittee decided to recommend removal of \$115,000, including a reduction of \$33,921 for the Literacy Coordinator, from Assistant Superintendent which will allow for only a Curriculum Coordinator.

The subcommittee also noted that since there will be a new phone system and payroll will be outsourced, they will recommend the removal of the switchboard operator for \$40,888 and the payroll

secretary for \$40,888.

Since there is no large increase in pupils, the subcommittee felt that the additional art and music teachers should be omitted and that a reallocation of the current staff would suffice, and that the additional social worker position should also be omitted since there was no large increase in pupils, and the basis of social worker count is pupil ratio.

Also, if the custodial schedules were staggered, one additional custodian could also be eliminated.

Ken Booth asked if the additional groundskeeper was going to be left in the School Subcommittee's recommendations. It will be.

Carl Brunetti noted that there were 12 new hires receiving the family plan in the schools' budget, but that historically, 30% opt for the individual plan so the School Subcommittee made an adjustment for that calculation.

Also, there are retirees who are receiving the family plan and should be receiving the individual plan.

The School Subcommittee looked at 5-year averages to determine the need for things like printing and binding, instructional supplies, curriculum textbooks, and office supplies.

The capital number that the School Subcommittee is suggesting now

is not the final number as calculations have to be made as some items will be left in the bond, and some items added to the capital list.

The Budget Board then discussed the municipal budget.

Public Works

A second building inspector is being paid for by Lincoln Park, and it was suggested that the position be added as a second Assistant Building Inspector.

The current building inspector may also retire.

Linda Noble noted that after Lincoln Park was done building, there would then still be 2 assistants that may not be necessary.

Ken Booth suggested having a footnote for that line of the budget explaining the situation and that once Lincoln Park is done and if the Assistant Building Inspector then fills the retirees position, the Budget Board may look at then not funding the second Assistant Building Inspector later on.

Ken also noted that the Assistant is already a town employee who is only being paid for by Lincoln Park because his work is there.

Linda Noble made a motion, seconded by Greg Leonard, that:

Inspector Salaries be \$65,290

Total Building Inspector Salaries be \$176,339

Total Department Salaries be \$187,839

The motion was accepted by unanimous vote.

Public Safety//Rescue

Bob Ericson made a motion, seconded by Carl Brunetti, that:

Pensions be \$94,709

Total Public Safety/Rescue be \$1,181,610

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Public Library

Roberta Gosselin asked the Library Director for the actual expenditures up-to-date, and provided the information to the Budget Board.

The Library will also be going to a 35-hour workweek.

Linda Noble made a motion, seconded by Greg Leonard that:

Library Salaries be \$450,271

Longevity be \$14,936

Total Salaries be \$466,207

The motion was passed by unanimous vote.

Bob Ericson noted that if the library had supplied a salary study showing that the salaries are low, it would have been better than their recommending 4 or 5% increases in salary for certain positions but not all, which sets a poor precedent.

Ken Booth noted that the town is now negotiating stipends on top of the raises given in the new contract, so 4 or 5% does not seem that out of line.

Roberta Gosselin noted that the library salaries are set by the Board of Trustees and Linda Noble suggested having the Budget Board

attend one of the Trustee meetings at a later time to see the process. The Budget Board will also request a copy of the salary study that the library had done.

Based on the information received by Roberta Gosselin, the following was adjusted:

Utilities should be \$30,000 and not \$50,000

Books and Magazines should be \$200,000

Social Security should be \$35,655

Health Insurance should be \$84,994

\$8,500 for the alarm system includes \$5,000 for the purchase and installation, and it then costs \$60. a month to run.

The town side also includes \$5,000 in the budget to pay for half of the system.

Linda Noble made a motion that the total Library Budget be \$941,586, seconded by Greg Leonard.

The Budget Board went back to discussing the School Budget.

John Tindall-Gibson noted that the Central Office Budget had an Assistant Superintendent budgeted and they plan to use the full amount to spread the money around in the best way to get the most done.

He also noted that there is a high turnover rate with the top leadership in the schools, and that there needs to be a sustained

effort to achieve great student achievements.

There are more than 500 employees in the schools, and no Human Resources Director.

Also, a lot of policies are old and the school needs to spend money on policy development.

There are also proficiency-based graduation requirements now that will require extra attention and money.

Jack Newman noted that previously, it seemed that the schools were leaning toward a Curriculum Coordinator and not an Assistant Superintendent.

John Tindall-Gibson replied that for a school system the size of Lincoln, an Assistant Superintendent is a necessity, and that the payroll position should be at least a half position to implement the payroll processes.

Jack Newman asked John Tindall-Gibson how he would prioritize the budget.

John Tindall-Gibson stated that he would leave academics intact and cut in the central offices area first.

It was noted that the schools could look into outsourcing social work.

John Tindall-Gibson stated that instead of art and music, which are existing programs, he would instead cut down on world languages and keyboarding for the 6th graders, but he also noted that any such adjustments do also affect the class schedules.

The Budget Board did agree that curriculum textbooks do need consistent funding, and although they are recommending they be cut back this year due to a lack of curriculum development, they do plan to fund the line properly next year.

John Tindall-Gibson noted that state is funding new science books for the new Physics First program.

Angelo Mennucci noted that even with 5 custodians total, it is a tremendous task to keep up with everything, and gave the example of Northern Elementary's addition and that they added a substitute custodian who would be there whenever not needed elsewhere. As it turned out, substitute coverage was needed quite a bit and the custodian was hardly ever working at Northern.

Due to this, over the first 3 years the school ended up with problems such as mold, etc. and Angelo stated that he would rather see the new middle school get off to a good start and be fully staffed with custodians.

Jeff Weiss noted that the School Dept. worked harder than ever to trim back their recommended budget, and that they ended up coming within \$100,000 of the 5.5% cap. He also noted that the Budget Board's recommendations seemed well reasoned.

Jeff asked that the Budget Board not recommend the cut of salary items, as he noted that there were other less imperative things that could be cut and the new middle school has not been integrated yet.

Elizabeth Black Robson noted that the schools are finally at a point where art and music are being implemented on a large level, and she did not favor cutting additional staff in these programs.

Ken Booth noted that the anticipated rate of growth and further Budget Board discussion would determine the final amount allowed for a budget.

Ken stated that he did understand that art and music are important and he hoped the schools would forgo a different route to provide for the department if need be.

Jeff Weiss noted that the purpose of going to the Auditor General to exceed the 5.5% cap was to provide for everything necessary.

Linda Noble felt that world languages and keyboarding should be left in after the original presentation by the schools.

Jack Newman noted that the Budget Board would provide a bottom-line budget with their rationale and recommendations to back it, but essentially it is the schools' job to allocate the money as they see fit.

Jack also noted that he was appalled that the schools had applied for a waiver on the 5.5% cap because it makes it seem like they are not trying to stay under it.

Ken Booth noted that the Budget Board did not have revenue projections and assessed values for property taxes yet.

The Budget Board went back to discussing the municipal side of the budget.

Town Council

The Budget Board noted that there were no raises for the Council in the salary warrant.

Claims Settlements should be 0, because they are paid out of the Town Solicitor's line.

Linda Noble made a motion that the bottom line be \$38,000, seconded by Greg Leonard.

The motion was passed by unanimous vote.

Town Solicitor

Linda Noble made a motion that the bottom line be \$164,907, seconded by Greg Leonard.

The motion was passed by unanimous vote.

Roberta Gosselin did not think that it was good accounting practice to accrue money for the settlements line.

Ken Booth noted that there was a large case pending at the state level that would affect the town by a large amount, however, the Budget Board decided to let the funding for that be added at the Financial Town Meeting if the settlement goes through before that.

Probate Judge

Linda Noble made a motion that the bottom line be \$4,531, seconded by Greg Leonard.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Town Sergeant

Linda Noble made a motion that the bottom line be \$1,400 seconded by Greg Leonard.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Board of Canvassers

Linda Noble made a motion that the bottom line be \$1,700 seconded by Greg Leonard.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Budget Board

The Budget Board discussed getting a new laptop computer or notebook.

Linda Noble made a motion that Expenses be increased to \$750, seconded by Greg Leonard.

The bottom line for the Budget Board became \$2,500.

The motion was passed by unanimous vote.

Zoning Board of Review

Linda Noble made a motion that the bottom line be \$12,020 seconded by Greg Leonard.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Planning Board

Linda Noble made a motion that the bottom line be \$11,320 seconded by Greg Leonard.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Board of Assessment Review

Linda Noble made a motion that the bottom line be \$2,250 seconded by Greg Leonard.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Tenants Board

Linda Noble made a motion that the bottom line be \$1,388 seconded by Greg Leonard.

The motion passed by a vote of 8-1 with Mary Varr voting opposed.

Conservation Commission

Linda Noble made a motion that the bottom line be \$6,550 seconded by Greg Leonard.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Sewer Appeals Board

Linda Noble made a motion that the bottom line be \$100 seconded by Greg Leonard.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Personnel Board

Linda Noble made a motion that the bottom line be \$2,100 seconded

by Greg Leonard.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Juvenile Hearing Board

Linda Noble made a motion that the bottom line be \$1,000 seconded by Greg Leonard.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Land Trust

\$1,000 will be shifted to Community Outreach and Education

There is no money budgeted in Grant Matching

Expenses will be \$300

Conferences will be \$200

Linda Noble made a motion that the bottom line be \$1,500 seconded by Greg Leonard.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Municipal Court

Linda Noble made a motion that the bottom line be \$23,000 seconded by Greg Leonard.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Grants and Contributions

Linda Noble made a motion that the bottom line be \$66,000 seconded by Greg Leonard.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Mary Varr asked how people find out when a grant is available from the town.

Ken Booth noted that generally, people have grant writers who look for grants.

Anyone who receives a grant benefits the town.

Fixed Charges

Social Security should be \$535,520

There were no changes in health care, contingency fund, or insurance and surety.

Roberta Gosselin noted that the actuarial costs are once a year, and are \$15,000.

The salary increases have been taken back out until they are actually received per the new contract.

Linda Noble made a motion that Total Salaries be \$3,426,621 and total Fixed Charges be \$33,88,297, seconded by Greg Leonard.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Capital

Linda Noble wanted to know what the \$12,000 in Other was for.

Ken Booth thought it was for breathing safety apparatus, but stated that he would research it.

Ken Booth noted that plow blades should not be in capital.

Recycle trucks are leased over three years.

There were quotes provided for the sewer jets, which justified the increase to \$45,681

Carl Brunetti made the motion to change the account accordingly, seconded by Claudette Lussier.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Bob Ericson noted that once the permits are acquired to repair the dams, the project should be done within a year.

Ken Booth noted that the Budget Board would address the issue in their annual message.

Linda Noble made a motion that the bottom line be \$365,700 seconded by Greg Leonard.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Debt Service

Roberta Gosselin thought that the budget should show the cost to issue the bonds

Linda Noble made a motion, seconded by Greg Leonard, that:

Total Municipal Debt be \$4,064,950

Total School Debt be \$2,660,104

Total Debt be \$6,725,054

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Revenue

Last year's tax levy as of 6/15 was \$42,923,046 which is the number

that can be increased by 105.5% to find the total amount that can be raised this year.

The following will be in the bond for the schools:

\$15,000 High School Roof

\$140,000 for Lonsdale Roof

Linda Noble made a motion that the total capital in the bond be \$155,000 seconded by Greg Leonard.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Linda Noble made a motion that the total amount to be put into resolution be \$239,649 seconded by Greg Leonard.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

This did not include ceiling or lighting at Northern ELC or Saylesville, or the open lav area at Fairlawn.

It did include the concrete walkways which were per a fire code.

Bob Ericson made a suggestion to bold the item topics in the annual budget message.

The Budget Board will work on the budget message at their next meeting.

Ken Booth noted that the Administrator put in \$30,000 for a fire study Roberta Gosselin noted that it should be put in by the Town Council or as part of the Administrator's budget, otherwise it appears as

though the Budget Board is behind it.

Linda Noble made a motion that the \$30,000 resolution for the fire study be removed seconded by Greg Leonard.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

The Budget Board went through and revised the annual resolutions.

Resolution #1

Linda Noble made a motion that the resolution be accepted, seconded by Greg Leonard.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Resolution #2

Linda Noble made a motion that the resolution be accepted, seconded by Greg Leonard.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Resolution #3

Linda Noble made a motion that the resolution be accepted, seconded by Greg Leonard.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Resolution #4

Linda Noble made a motion that the resolution be accepted, seconded by Greg Leonard.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Linda Noble noted that maybe if the school budget were not read first at the Financial Town Meeting, that there would be no problem having a quorum towards the end of the meeting.

Resolution #6

Linda Noble made a motion that the resolution be accepted, seconded by Greg Leonard.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

The wording will be verified with the Town Clerk.

Resolution #7

Linda Noble made a motion that the resolution be accepted, seconded by Greg Leonard.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

According to the calculation of the Budget Board, at a rate of 1.5% growth, the proposed budget would mean a net tax levy of \$45,709,197, which would leave \$500,000 before hitting the 5.5% cap.

The Budget Board added \$68,566 in for Literacy Coordinators and a Teachers Assistant for \$35,789.

Also, the art and music teachers were added back in but the social worker was left out because the current staffing is sufficient.

Linda Noble made a motion, seconded by Greg Leonard, that the total

be \$44,752,971, which is 10.4% increased over last year.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Linda Noble made a motion, seconded by Greg Leonard, that:

Property taxes be \$45,148,724

Total Municipal Revenues be \$67,169,963

Total Local Revenues be \$3,294,600

Resolution #5

**Linda Noble made a motion that the resolution be accepted,
seconded by Greg Leonard.**

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

**Ken Booth thought that there should be a chart of accounts so that
each line item has its own account number throughout the budget.**

**Claudette Lussier noted that salaries are 62%, which is a high
percentage of the budget on the municipal side.**

Jack Newman made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Carl Brunetti

The meeting adjourned at 11:35.